DESCRIPTION

An official journal of the The Royal Society for Public Health and a sister journal of Public Health in Practice.

Public Health is an international, multidisciplinary peer-reviewed journal. It publishes original papers, reviews and short reports on all aspects of the science, philosophy, and practice of public health.

It is aimed at all public health practitioners and researchers and those who manage and deliver public health services and systems. It will also be of interest to anyone involved in provision of public health programmes, the care of populations or communities and those who contribute to public health systems in any way.

Published twelve times a year, Public Health considers submissions on any aspect of public health across age groups and settings.

These include:
• Public health practice and impact
• Applied Epidemiology
• Need or impact assessments
• Health service effectiveness, management and re-design
• Health Protection including control of communicable diseases
• Health promotion and disease prevention
• Evaluation of public health programmes or interventions
• Public health governance, audit and quality
• Public health law and ethics
• Public health policy and comparisons
• Capacity in public health systems and workforce

This is not an exhaustive list and the Editors will consider articles on any issue relating to public health.

Public Health also publishes invited articles, reviews and supplements from leading experts on topical issues.
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GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

INTRODUCTION

Aims
Public Health is an international, multidisciplinary peer-reviewed journal. It publishes original papers, reviews and short communications on all aspects of the science, philosophy and practice of public health.

It is aimed at all public health practitioners and researchers and those who manage and deliver public health services and systems. It will also be of interest to anyone involved in provision of public health programmes, the care of populations or communities and those who contribute to public health systems in any way.

Scope
Public Health considers submissions on any aspect of public health across age groups and settings. These include:

- Public health practice and impact
- Applied epidemiology
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- Evaluation of public health programmes or interventions
- Public health governance, audit and quality
- Public health law and ethics
- Public health policy and comparisons
- Capacity in public health systems and workforce

This is not an exhaustive list and the Editors will consider articles on any issue relating to the health of populations or the public.

Reviews and Supplements
Public Health publishes invited articles, reviews and supplements from leading experts on topical issues.

Organizations or individuals who wish to present proposals for supplements should contact the Editors at public.health@rsph.org.uk for a copy of the specific guidance on the publication of supplements.

Impact on Practice
Papers describing original research impacting on public health practice are particularly encouraged. Those describing a particular event (e.g. an outbreak of infectious disease) should be submitted as soon as possible. Fast track publication of suitable articles is possible; please contact the Editorial Office regarding this.

Papers are invited from anywhere in the world, and so authors are asked to ensure that sufficient context is provided for all readers to appreciate their contribution.

Types of paper
The types of papers that may be considered for inclusion are:

1) Original research, including evaluations of public health interventions or programmes, and public health practice original work on audit, workforce or resource development (see section 4.2);
2) Short communications (see section 4.3) and;
3) Review papers, which include meta-analysis and systematic review (see section 4.4)

We also consider the following papers:

1) Letters (see section 4.5);
2) Celebrating Public Health Lives: biographical articles about named individuals, living or deceased, who have made a special contribution to public health (see section 4.6).
We welcome student papers and encourage students to publish their work, e.g. originating from practice-based research, which will be subject to constructive peer review process.

On submission, authors should indicate in which category their contribution is to be considered. If authors are uncertain of the category to which their paper is best suited, they should make this clear in their covering letter to the Editors.

You may wish to consider referring to the Equator guidelines http://www.equator-network.org/, when submitting your paper.

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Papers submitted to Public Health are carefully reviewed in the first instance by one of the Editors. Papers that do not meet editorial needs; are methodically flawed; or lack originality will be rejected. We will also reject papers that fail to provide sufficient ethical approval where required (see section 9.3) and we shall refer papers back for revision prior to any review if they do not comply with Journal style.

Papers which pass the Editorial review will be sent out to peer-review and will be reviewed by at least two external reviewers (short communications will only be sent to one reviewer). Reviewers are asked to consider whether the paper: contains new research findings or information; is relevant to public health practice, is technically sound; and is suitably presented.

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E-mail: public.health@rsph.org.uk

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The manuscript should contain a statement that the work has been approved by the appropriate ethical committees related to the institution(s) in which it was performed and that subjects gave informed consent to the work.

Studies involving experiments with animals must state that their care was in accordance with institution guidelines.

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Funding: None
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Each author is required to declare his or her individual contribution to the article: all authors must have materially participated in the research and/or article preparation, so roles for all authors should be described. The statement that all authors have approved the final article should be true and included in the disclosure.

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To avoid unnecessary errors you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' functions of your word processor.

Article structure

4.2 Original research, including evaluation papers
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Papers should be clear, precise and logical and should not normally exceed 3,000 words.

Original research papers should be set out as follows:
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• Title page- bearing title, all authors' initials, surname, main degrees (two only) and the name and location of the institution(s) where the work was done. The author to whom proofs and correspondence should be sent should be clearly indicated with correct address, e-mail, telephone and fax details.
• Abstract. This should be structured under the following headings:
  Objectives
  Study design
  Methods
  Results
  Conclusions
• Keywords. 3-6 keywords should follow the abstract
• Introduction
• Methods
• Results
• Discussion
• Acknowledgements including declarations: Statements of ethical approval, funding and competing interests (see section 9)
• References (see section 10)

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Tables and figures
Tables and figures should be kept to a minimum. Tables must be comprehensible without reference to the text if possible. References can be cited in the tables if needed. Authors should indicate at approximately what point in the text the table should appear. Figures, graphs, drawings etc. should not be over complex and must be intelligible when reduced in size for printing. They should be on separate sheets, numbered and with legends.

Tables
Number tables consecutively in accordance with their appearance in the text. Place footnotes to tables below the table body and indicate them with superscript lowercase letters. Avoid vertical rules. Be sparing in the use of tables and ensure that the data presented in tables do not duplicate results described elsewhere in the article.

4.3 Short communications

A short communication is preferred for the submission of important preliminary observations or data that does not warrant publication as a full paper. Short communications should be approximately 500-1500 words in length and provide adequate information to allow for the same peer review given to other submissions.
• A structured abstract will be required during the online submission process.
• Keywords will also be required. However, specific sections, such as Methods, should not be used in the manuscript itself.
• A short communication can include one table or figure and up to 10 references. Preliminary data published as a short communication will not preclude subsequent publication of more complete results if the work is significantly expanded.

4.4 Review papers

Click here for an example

Systematic Review papers presenting exhaustive, critical assessments of the published literature on relevant public health topics or questions will be considered. Such reviews should be prepared in strict compliance with MOOSE or PRISMA guidelines or with Cochrane’s complementary guidelines for systematic reviews of health promotion and public health interventions, as appropriate. Public Health encourages authors to use alternative databases covering scientific literature from low- and middle-income countries not indexed in the traditional international databases (i.e. Medline, Web of Science). All systematic reviews need to be submitted with a supporting statement of which guideline has been used in the preparation of the review.

Narrative Review papers will be considered by Public Health. Whilst no formal guidelines for such reviews exist, authors should be very clear in what criteria they have used for the selection of studies and describe the methods used to undertake the review in the body of the paper. Generally speaking, narrative reviews will only be considered where the author(s) are clearly experts in the research field under consideration or the public health issue under consideration is not amenable to systematic review. The reviews need to be submitted with a supporting statement justifying the appropriateness of undertaking a narrative review.

Review papers will be considered by Public Health. Whilst no formal guidelines for such reviews exist, authors should be very clear in what criteria they have used for the selection of studies and describe the methods used to undertake the review in the body of the paper. Generally speaking, narrative reviews will only be considered where the author(s) are clearly experts in the research field under consideration or the public health issue under consideration is not amenable to systematic review. The reviews need to be submitted with a supporting statement justifying the appropriateness of undertaking a narrative review.

Review papers should not exceed 3000 words. They should include a Structured Abstract: Tables/Illustrations can be included up to a maximum of 5, though larger tables may be included only on the electronic version of the paper.

References: up to a maximum of 100.
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Readers are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editors and these can include responses to previously published papers or original data.

Authors will be given the opportunity to comment and respond to any correspondence we intend to include in the 'Letters to the Editors' regarding their previously published manuscript.

4.6 Celebrating Public Health Lives
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Keywords are not required.

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